President Musharraf justified his decision to support the internationl coalition against terrorism on the grounds that Pakistan had to protect four critical concerns which he identified as Pakistan's security from 'external threats', economics revival, protecting Pakistan's nuclear and missile assets, and the "Kashmir cause".

There have been reports of continuing flows of material and men from Pakistan, in support of the Taliban regime, despite Pakistan's professed support to the action against international terrorism. This gap, between Pakistan's professed commitment and the actual situation on the ground, has been widely commented upon including in the international media.

Pakistan authorities are obliged, including under UNSC Resolution, 1373 on terrorism to refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, and to deny safe havens to entities or persons involved in terrorism.

Pakistan's capabilities of making a Nuclear Bomb

1908. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fears expressed by U.N. Atomic Watchdog of Pak's becoming a source of handware for terrorist planning to make a nuclear bomb with the former Soviet Union scientists providing the required know-how and its call made to the world nuclear powers to review the safety of nuclear material in their arsenals; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) At a recent international symposium on nuclear safeguards, verification and security issues, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in the context of heightened threat of nuclear terrorism, expressed the hope that the countries concerned were urgently reviewing the safety and security of their nuclear weapons. However, as regards the fears quoted in

the first part of the question about Pakistan and the former Soviet Union, the IAEA has officially denied news reports which attributed such a statement to the Director General.

(b) Government has taken adequate security measures for the protection of all vital nuclear installations in the country and these are constantly monitored in the wake of the 11th September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. Additional security measures to tighten and enhance the security of installations have been taken and due vigilance is being maintained.

Security Assessments of Pakistan's Nuclear Assets

1909. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH:
SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards Press reports to the effect that three top retired nuclear scientists of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission have been detained for their suspected links with the Taliban regime;

(b) whether Government are aware that the USA is drawing up a contingency plan to ensure that Pakistan's nuclear assets do not fall into the hands of Jehadi forces;

(c) what is Government's assessment of safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear assets; and

(d) what are the implications of these developments for India's security?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a)[1] and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Government has entered into strategic dialogues with several countries and has thus assured ifself reasonably of the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear assets. Government remain fully committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard the nation's security in accordance with its own assessment of security threats.